THE PRINCIPLES OF A PEOPLE

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Stiling themſelves

Philadelphians,

Diſcovered in their niceſt Points and Matters; accurately handled, ſhewing their Riſe, Continuance, and Tenents in Doctrin and manner of Proceeding, *&c.*

ALSO

A Curious Diſcourſe between an *Engliſh Diſſenter* and *French Proteſtant*, by way of Dialogue, in Vindication of the Church of *England* againſt Novelties in Religion.

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The Principles of a People ſtiling themſelves Philadelphians, &c.

THere has lately appeared in *England*, eſpecially at *London*, the great Metropolis of this Kingdom a Sect, or certain number of People, who attribute to themſelves an extraordinary Sanctity, pretending to Revelation of glorious things to come in their Church, and to be very near at hand. Wherefore finding the Diſcourſe of them has made a great noiſe, and is much talked of; I have thought fit among other matters, by way of Eſſay, to give a Light into their Principles, conſidering ſeveral who have heard of

them are ignorant of what they pretend to, and that from their own Writings and Sayings.

They ſeem to derive themſelves from a Sect long ſince ſtarted up, calling themſelves the Family of Love, now ſtiling themſelves *Philadelphians*, or the Little Virgin Church of *Philadelphia*, waiting for, and expecting the Kingdom of Chriſt; and inviting all People to come into their Congregation, abſurdly intimating, as if Salvation was no where elſe ſo ſure to be obtained; promiſing themſelves to grow by degrees into a glorious Church, adorned with Purity and Holineſs, a Virgin Church undefiled; and this in ſome of their Writings is ſaid to be revealed to them by the Holy One: However, they keep up much Mirth and Jollity, ſing Hymns of their own making, and would make the World believe

they

they are extraordinarily gifted above others; and now hear their Principal Opinions and Tenents.

They hold there shall be a total and full Redemption by Christ, but that it is a hidden Mystery not to be understood, without the Revelation of the Holy Spirit.

That the Holy Spirit is now at hand to reveal it to all loving Enquirers, and holy Seekers; and that at present the Completion of such a Redemption is withheld and obstructed by the Apocaliptical Seals; wherefore as the Spirit of God shall open Seal after Seal, so shall this Redemption come in time to be revealed, not only particularly but also universally.

That in this gradual opening the Mystery of Redemption in Christ, doth consist the unsearchable Wisdom of God, which continually may Reveal Truth and new things

to those that worthily search after them. In order to which the Ark of the Testimony shall be open in Heaven before the World shall end, and the living Testimony contained therein shall be unsealed.

That the presence of the Divine Ark will constitute the *Philadelphian* Church, aud where-ever that is, there of necessity must the Ark be; and that the unsealing of the Living Testimony within the Ark of the Lord, must begin the promulgation of the everlasting Gospel of the Kingdom.

That the proclaiming of the Testimony of the Kingdom will be done, as with the sound of a Trumpet, to give notice of it to all the Nations upon Earth, and particularly to the Professors of the Christian Religion; because it will be all ended with the power

of

of acting Wonders and Miracles, so that there shall be an Authoritative Decision immediatly given forth from Christ, for the putting an end to all Controversies relating to the True Church, and this Decision will be by the actual Sealing of the Members of the True Church, with the name of God, giving them a Commission to Act by Virtue of the same, and this new Name, say they, will distinguish them from the Seven Thousand Names of *Babylon*; but however, the Election and Preparation of this Church is to be after a secret and hidden manner, as in his Minority *David* was approved before his other Brethren, and anointed by the Prophet *Samuel*; and though by that means appointed King, yet did he not presently enjoy it in its outward Possession till after *Saul*'s Death.

Of the Stem of *David* afterwards arose a Church, and another Virgin Church is yet to arise from the same Stem, that has not known Man, but as yet not Born, and shall be ignorant of Humane Constitution: And if it be yet to be Born, then some considerable time will be required before it can outstrip its Minority and come to considerable Age or Maturity.

The Birth say, they of the Virgin Church was visionary Tippified to St. *John*, by the great wonder in Heaven, a Woman bringing forth her First-born, which was caught up to the Throne of God, *Revel.* 12. For as a Virgin Conceived and brought forth Christ after the Flesh, so say they a Virgin is designed by God to bring forth the First-born after the Spirit, who shall be filled with the

the Holy Ghost and with Power, and the Virgin hereto designed must be of a pure Spirit and a Radiant Body, purged from Sin and Dead Works impregnated with the Holy Ghost, &c.

The Church so brought forth shall be Sealed with the Mark of the Divine Name, and have the gift of Miracles and Power, beyond whatever hath been, so that all Nations thereby shall be brought unto it, and so it shall be the Catholick Church, according to the utmost Latitude and genuine sense of the Word and Signification: It also must be an anointed Church, whereby it may truly bear the Nature of Christ or Christian, being with him Anointed to the Priestly, Prophetical and Kingly Dignity; and hence there will be no Impositions or Bonds, but the Holy Unction among the new Born

Spirits

Spirits will be all in all; and this Catholick anointed Church must be truly holy as Christ himself is holy, so worthily bearing the Name of the Lord our Holiness or the Lord our Righteousness.

That until there be such a Church prepared on the Earth so Holy, so Catholick, and so Anointed, that is, without Spot or Blemish, Adorned as a Bride to meet her Bridegroom. Christ will not personally descend to solemnize this Marriage (say they) nor present it to his Father; but when such a Bridal Church shall be made ready, then he will no longer delay his Personal coming.

There is not (continue they) at this day visible on Earth a Holy Catholick, Anointed, and Bridal Church; all the Churches and Professions being found light when weighed in the Ballance, therefore they

they cannot be termed this Church; but out of them a new and glorious Church ſhall ariſe up, in whom there ſhall be no fault to be found, like as he findeth none with *Philadelphia*; then ſhall the Glory of God and the Lamb be ſo reſted upon it, as the Clouds on the Tippical Tabernacle, that it ſhall be called the Tabernacle Church, and the Tabernacle of Wiſdom.

Tho' this *Philadelphian* Church is not yet known in viſibility, yet it may lie hid at this time in the Womb of the Morning, though time will bring it into viſibility, as coming out of the Wilderneſs in this preſent Age; then will it go on to Multiply and Propagate univerſally, not only to the number of the Firſt-born, but alſo to the Remnant of the Seed, againſt which the Dragon ſhall make continual War; wherefore the Spirit

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of *David* must most eminently revive in this Church, and especially in the most Eminent Members of it, who shall have Power given them to resist, and overcome the Dragon and his Angels: This will be standing up of *Michael* the Great Prince of *Israel*.

Egypt figures out the servile condition, under which each one of *Abraham*'s Seed doth groan; but a Prophet and Prophetical Generation will the most High yet raise up, who with Spiritual Weapons will deliver his People. For Christ before his own distinct and Personal appearance, will first appear and represent himself in some close Vessel to be a Guide to the rest, to bring them unto the Land of promise the new Created State, whereby they shall make away to the Redeemed of the Lord to return to Mount *Sion*; but none shall

stand

ſtand in any conſiderable Office under God, but ſuch as are tryed Stones, after the Pattern and Similitude of the Chief Corner Stone Chriſt. This will be a Fiery Tryal, which but a few will be able to paſs; wherefore thoſe that wait for the Appearance of the Viſible Church, are ſtrictly charged to hold faſt that which they have, and wait together in unity of pure Love, praying in the Holy Ghoſt according to the Apoſtolick Pattern, that they may be ſent forth to multiply more univerſally.

As for this Tryal (ſay they) will be of abſolute neceſſity to every one in particular, and to all in general, for the Cementing and Conſtituting the True *Philadelphian* Church, by clearing away all the preſiding Infirmities of Nature, and burning up all the Hay-ſtubble and Droſs, which they may have added

added to the Work of the Lord; for in the pure Church nothing muſt remain, but what can endure the Fiery Tryal, for as a Refiner will the Lord purifie the Sons and Daughters of it, that they may offer unto him an Offering in perfect Righteouſneſs.

Though (ſay they) the Operation of the Holy Spirit in the Waters may contend for, along with many Evils and Infirmities, but, nevertheleſs if it be kept warm and watched to it, cannot but work out a perfect Cure, and bring about a full and total Redemption from the Earth; wherefore it is required on our part to ſuffer the Spirit of burning, to do upon us the Refining Work, Fanning us with his Fiery Breath, and ſearching every part within us, until all be pure and clear, and we arrive at the fixed Body from whence the Wonders

ders are to flow out, and this Body (continue they) will be the Sealing character of the *Philadelphian* Church; upon this Body will be fixed the *Urim* and *Thummim*, Light and Perfection, that are to be appropriated to the Priests of the *Melchizedekian* Order, whose Descent is not to be accounted in the Genealogy of that Creation, which is under the Fall, but in another Genealogy which is from the Restauration.

Hence they will have a deep Search, and a Divine Insight to the secret things of God, and will be able to Prophecy in a clear Ground, not darkly or enegmatically, but will know what is couched in the first Originality of all Beings, and in the Eternal Archetys of all Nature, and so will be capable to bring them forth according

cording to the Divine Councils and Ordinances. The mighty Spirit of *Cyrus* is appointed to lay the Foundation of the third Temple, and to ſupport its Building.

There are (ſay they) ſuch Characters and Marks, whereby the pure Virgin Church ſo Founded, ſhall be certainly known and diſtinguiſhed from others, and whereby the true ſound and union of the Holy Ghoſt ſhall be diſcerned from that which is Low, Falſe, and Counterfeit; for there muſt be a Manifeſtation of the Spirit, whereby to edifie and raiſe up the Church ſuitable to the Reſurrection of Chriſt. This Manifeſtation therefore (ſay they) muſt be in the Abſoluteneſs of Power, as well as in the Beauty of Holineſs, to bring down Heaven upon Earth, and repreſent here the New *Jeruſalem*

ſalem State. In order to which Spirits that are thus pure Begotten and Born of God, can aſcend to the *Jeruſalem* above, and receive there ſuch a Miſſion, whereby they ſhall be empowered to bring down its Glory; and none but thoſe that are Riſen with Chriſt in Regeneration can aſcend, and having received of his Glory can deſcend again to communicate the ſame, and to be his Repreſentatives upon the New Earth as ſubordinate under him. But he that is Aſcended and Glorified has made himſelf as it were our Debtor, and will not be wanting to furniſh and qualifie our High and Principal Inſtruments who ſhall be moſt humble for the drawing to them the ſcatter'd Flock, and gathering them into one Fold, out of all Nations, Languages, and Kindred: Therefore there ſhould be

a Holy Emulation and Ambition, ſtired up among all Lovers of *Jeſus*, that they may be the firſt Fruits to Him that is riſen; and be made Principal Agents for him and with him; that they may be, if poſſible, of the Firſt Born of the New *Jeruſalem* Mother.

That all Lovers of Jeſus, and true waiters for the Kingdom in Spirit, under what Profeſſion ſoever, ſay they, or Forms diſperſed, ought to be numbred amongſt the *Philadelphian* Spirits, to which this Meſſage appertains.

They own the Society is not the Church, but a Preparatory of ſuch as wait in the unity of Spirit for its Glorious Appearance and Manifeſtation. This and much more they deliver; but, when all they can ſay is done, the Purity of the Worſhip in the National Eſtabliſh'd Church

and the ſoundneſs of its Doctrine, ought to be adher'd to rather than new fangles, and uncertainties, and whimſies. A curious Diſcourſe of whoſe Diſcipline I ſhall now give you in a Dialogue between an *Engliſh* Diſſenter and a *French* Proteſtant; wherein many curious Points are nicely handled and controverted, greatly for the Edification of the Reader.

A Friendly Discourse BETWEEN AN ENGLISH Dissenter AND A FRENCH Protestant.

Engl. Dissenter. I Understand, Sir, you are a *French* Protestant; I am heartily glad to see you.

Fr. Protestant. You are truly inform'd, Sir, I am a *French* Protestant.

E. D. Pray Sir, in what Condition are the poor Protestants in *France?*

F. P. When I left *France*, their Condition was very deplorable; and for any thing I hear, it continues ſo ſtill.

E. D. I am griev'd at my heart for them; for I am ſo much one with them as to their Religion, for which they are ſo cruelly Perſecuted, that I cannot but extreamly Pity them.

F. P. Then I ſuppoſe, Sir, you are a Proteſtant.

E. D. Yes, Sir, and of the ſame Judgment as you are in matters of Religion.

F. P. I am glad to underſtand ſo much; Like, we ſay, loves like.

E. D. Pray Sir, how long have you been in *England?*

F. P. Almoſt theſe five Years.

E. D. I do not doubt then, but that you are a good Proficient, by this time, in our Engliſh Tongue.

F. P. Truly, Sir, I have nothing to boaſt of in this regard; for whether it be the hardneſs of the Engliſh

ſiſh Tongue, or the thickneſs of my Scull, I know not; but ſo it is, that I can onely make a ſhift to ſpeak ſome broken Engliſh.

E. D. Don't ſay ſo, Sir; methinks you ſpeak very intelligibly, and proper enough for a Foreigner. I can underſtand you very well; and if you pleaſe to enter with me, for this is my Houſe, I ſhall be glad to have ſome further diſcourſe with you.

F. P. Sir, I accept of your kindneſs; and if you pleaſe to ſhew me the way, I ſhall follow you.

E. D. Sir, you are very heartily welcome; I am glad to ſee you here; be pleas'd to take a Seat. Pray Sir, how do you like our Countrey?

F. P. Extraordinary well, Sir; and were it not for the unhappy Diviſions that are amongſt you, eſpecially in matters of Religion, I ſhould have reaſon to believe this, with the adjoining Iſlands, to be the *Inſulæ*

Fortu-

Fortunatæ, or happy Iſlands of the Antients.

E. D. I perceive, Sir, you are ſenſible then of the Diviſions that are amongſt us.

F. P. Ay, Sir, I am but too well inform'd of them; and indeed very ſadly concern'd, to ſee that Proteſtants cannot agree amongſt themſelves, which certainly caſts a great blemiſh upon the Reformation.

E. D. So it doth indeed, Sir; and you may thank the Church of *England* for it.

F. P. Why the Church of *England*, Sir?

E. D. Becauſe 'tis *She* has refuſed all terms of Accommodation, that we *Proteſtant Diſſenters*, as they call us, have offer'd to her.

F. P. I never heard that ſhe had refuſed any. But pray, Sir, be pleas'd to let me know, what thoſe terms are that you have offer'd her, and ſhe hath refuſed?

E. D. We

E. D. We have propounded to her the laying aſide of the *Common-prayer*, and parting with her *Ceremonies*; and for other things, we might probably comply with them.

F. P. But, Sir, are you ſure that what you demand is reaſonable, and may juſtly be granted?

E. D. Without doubt ſhe may, and ſhe ought, and ſhe can do no leſs for us, than to wave her Popiſh *Common-prayer-book*, and caſt off her ſuperſtitious *Ceremonies.*

F. P. Pray, Sir, let me beg of you, to acquaint me, what you have to object againſt the Common-prayer; and afterwards, if the time gives leave, I ſhall be glad to hear what you have to alledge againſt our Church-Ceremonies.

E. D. That I will, Sir; and ſhall do it the more freely, becauſe I ſhould be glad to undeceive you, for I perceive by your diſcourſe you are one of that Party.

F. P. To deal ſincerely with you, Sir, I am a Member of the Church of *England*, but withall a true friend to Diſſenters; and I hope you will be ſo too, if in Anſwering your Objections, I can convince you, that the Common-prayer of the Church is very good and edifying, and her Ceremonies lawfull and decent.

E. D. I ſhall conſider what you have to ſay.

F. P. But, Sir, it lies at your door to begin, by propounding your Objections againſt the Common-prayer.

E. D. I have many things to object againſt that Idol: And, in the firſt place, I think it ought to be taken away, becauſe it is unlawfull to have a ſet Form of Prayer impos'd upon the Church.

F. P. Either you or I, Sir, are ſtrangely miſtaken in this point; for I muſt own, that my Judgment always hath been, that it is not one-

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ly lawfull to have a ſet Form of Prayer in the Church: but what is more, that no Church can well be without one.

E. D. Pray how ſo, Sir? For, if I be not greatly miſtaken, you ſpeak now againſt the General ſenſe of the *French* Proteſtants; for I never heard that they had any ſet Forms of Prayer.

F. P. I perceive, Sir, you have been ill inform'd concerning theſe matters; for, the truth is, we *French* Proteſtants have a Common-prayer-book, which was compos'd by *Calvin* himſelf, and therein we agree with the concurring practiſe of the Univerſal Church: for I never read or heard of any Church in the World, but had a ſet Form of Prayer; ſo that for you to oppoſe it, is no leſs than to deny the Authority, Teſtimony and Practiſe of all the Saints of the Old and New Teſtaments, both Prophets and Apoſtles, and

and the expreſs Command of our Saviour himſelf; and, in a word, Sir, you condemn the general ſenſe and practiſe of Chriſtianity and the Holy Catholick Church.

E. D. I hear what you ſay, Sir, and expect you ſhould prove it.

F. P. Nay more than this, you contradict the Example of our great Lord and Maſter, the Founder of our Religion, and *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith.*

E. D. This is a high Charge indeed; but pray be pleas'd to make it out.

F. P. That I will, Sir. Firſt I ſay, that you contradict the Authority and Practice of the Prophets in the Old Teſtament, foraſmuch as it is evident that they made uſe of ſet Forms of Prayer, and had a particular Command ſo to doe: to be convinc'd of this, be pleas'd to reade the 26th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, from Verſe 13. to 16. and the 14th. Chap-

ter

ter of *Hosea*, beginning at the second Verse, *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him*, &c. and the 2d of *Joel*, Verse 17. *Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord*, &c.

Secondly, You contradict the Command of our Lord and Saviour, and the Practice of the holy Apostles, which I prove from the 11th Chapter of St. *Luke*, the 1st and 2d Verses, where we reade that one of our Saviour's Disciples asked him in the Name of all his Companions, to teach them to pray, as *John* had taught his Disciples; whereupon our Saviour, addressing himself to all his Disciples, said, *When ye pray, say, Our Father*, &c. From whence I infer these two things: First, That the Apostles had a set Form of Prayer prescrib'd them by Christ himself; for it is impossible to order any Form in

in more plain and expreſs terms, than our Saviour makes uſe of in recommending this Prayer to his Diſciples. Secondly, I conclude from hence, that the Diſciples made uſe of this Form; which will not be queſtion'd, if we conſider the great deſire they ſhewed to obtain this Form of Prayer from our Saviour, and the readineſs wherewith they always obeyed the Commands he laid upon them. So that this cannot but be a ſufficient proof to any thinking Man, that when they prayed, they made uſe of this Form or Preſcription their bleſſed Lord and Maſter had at their requeſt given them, with this expreſs Command; *When you pray, ſay, Our Father*, &c.

3. You oppoſe the General Practice of Chriſtendom, and of the Holy Catholick Church; becauſe neither your ſelf, nor any Man elſe, can give an inſtance of any Church in the World, from the Apoſtles times to

theſe our days, but what had a ſet Form of Prayers: for though all have not uſed the ſame, yet there is no Church but has uſed ſome Form or other.

4. You condemn the Example and Practice of our dear Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; for it is evident that he himſelf made uſe of a Form of Prayer, *Matt.* 26. v. 44.

E. D. I will not undertake now to return you a particular Anſwer to what you have here alledged; but ſhall onely ſay, that Praying by a Form, has by experience been found a hindrance and obſtacle to true fervent Prayer in the Spirit; and to deal plainly with you, this ſeems to be one great reaſon why the Miniſters of the Church of *England* are ſo dull and ignorant in this point, and ſo little acquainted with ſpiritual Prayer.

F. P. I am not a little ſurpriz'd at this your Anſwer; for having but

juſt now proved to you, that the Prophets and Apoſtles, the Holy Catholick Church, and Chriſt himſelf made uſe of Forms of Prayer; you, after all this, come and tell me, that Praying by Forms, is a hindrance to Praying by the Spirit; which is as much as to ſay, that neither the Prophets, Apoſtles, the Catholick Church, nor Chriſt himſelf prayed by the Spirit, becauſe they made uſe of a ſet Form, which is a near ſtep to Blaſphemy.

E. D. I did not deſign to ſay ſo much neither; though I muſt confeſs that, Praying by a ſet Form, ſeems to me (for I find it ſo by experience) to be a great Obſtacle to true ſpiritual Prayer.

F. P. Though it may ſeem ſo to you; yet your Charity ſhould lead you rather to queſtion your own Judgment, than to paſs ſo raſh a Cenſure upon the Saints of the Old and New Teſtament, yea, upon Chriſt himſelf; beſides, you ought to be very

very wary of expoſing your ſelf to the deriſion of all men, by ſuppoſing your ſelf wiſer than all the Prophets and Apoſtles, than the whole Chriſtian Church and Chriſt himſelf, ſince it is moſt certain that they made uſe of Forms; and not onely ſo, but our Saviour himſelf preſcribed a Form of Prayer to his Diſciples, commanding them, when they prayed, to uſe the ſame; which he would never have done, had it indeed been ſo great a hindrance to fervent Prayer by the Spirit, as you pretend.

E. D. If it be not a hindrance to others, I am ſure 'tis ſo to me.

F. P. I hope I ſhall underſtand you better, if you pleaſe to explain to me what you mean by *praying by the Spirit.*

E. D. I ſuppoſe no true Chriſtian can be ignorant of what Praying by the Spirit is, and therefore I can't ſee any neceſſity there is of explaining

ning a thing ſo obvious to the underſtanding of all.

F. P. Since you ſeem unwilling to give me your meaning, I am very free to give you mine; to pray by the Spirit is, as I take it, to pray by the help and aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, ſo as to have our hearts and minds deeply affected with the ſenſe of our wants, and all our Faculties and Affections inflamed with the Love of God, and ſtedfaſt Faith in his Promiſes.

E. D. I perceive we do not diſagree at all in the meaning of the words.

F. P. I am glad we are ſo far agreed: for it is evident that, according to this meaning of the words, a ſet Form of Prayer is ſo far from being a *hindrance*, that indeed it is a great help *to fervent praying by the Spirit*; and on the contrary, Extemporary Prayer muſt needs be a great impediment to it. To convince you

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of this, I desire you would consider, that when we pray by a Form, we have more time to study the import of our Requests, and to weigh and examine every Petition with greater attention; we have more leisure to understand and discern our wants, and to present them before God; we can the better prepare and dispose our selves for so holy a Duty; and in a word, we can be more intent and *recollected* to improve the motions of the Spirit, having nothing else to doe, but to fix our mind wholly on God, whilst we are praising of him, and have our hearts suitably affected with the things we pray for. Whereas in *Extemporary Prayer*, the mind of the Minister, or whoever else it is that prayeth, is taken up in hunting for expressions to utter his thoughts; and for fear of being put to a stand, he is forced to follow, not the motions of the Spirit, or the dictate of his understanding,

ſtanding, but the fluency of an acquired habit of Praying; and by this means doth often begin, where he ſhould end, and end where he ſhould begin. And thoſe very men that ſpeak ſo much againſt the neceſſary and edifying Repetitions that we uſe in our Common-prayer, do very frequently in their Extemporary-prayer repeat the ſame things over and over again, though it may be in different expreſſions. And as for the People that hear a Miniſter pray an Extemporary-prayer, as they do not know before-hand what he will ſay, they muſt firſt attend to what he ſaith; in the next place they muſt conſider whether what he prayeth be according to the Word of God, and fit for them to join with: but whilſt the Hearer is thus employ'd, he that prays is got to another thing, and leaves his Hearers behind to overtake him as they beſt can; which according to my apprehenſion makes the

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way of praying extempore ſo difficult and uneaſie, that it is morally impoſſible for both Miniſter and People, to pray ſo devoutly, or at leaſt ſo underſtandingly as they ought to doe. If you pleaſe well to weigh and conſider what I have here offered, I queſtion not but you will be convinced, that a ſet Form of Prayer is ſo far from being a *hindrance*, that it is a great furtherance to *zealous praying by the Spirit*; whereas the Prayer you are ſo much taken with, is indeed a great obſtacle to it.

E. D. However Sir, I ſuppoſe you will grant me, that it is this tying themſelves up to a Form, that hath made the Miniſters of the Church of *England* ſo dull and devoid of the Gift of Prayer, that they cannot pray without Book; and may rather be compar'd to thoſe Dumb dogs whom the Prophet reproves, than be look'd upon as Miniſters of the Goſpel.

F. P. Though I am a Stranger here, yet I have very good reason to believe, that I am better acquainted with the Ministers of the Church of *England* than you are, and am better inform'd of their parts and abilities, than you can be; for I have made it my business to be acquainted with them, not maliciously to slander and abuse them, but to the end I might the better understand and value them, and profit by them. And if you will give me leave to speak my Judgment, which is not grounded upon hear-say, but upon good knowledge of, and converse with them, I must render them this true and unbiass'd testimony, That of all the Clergy I ever was acquainted with, they are the most Learned and Godly.

E. D. You are a *French* man Sir, and therefore I suppose that much of this may pass for Compliment.

F. P

F. P. I am indeed a *French*-man by birth, but yet I value my ſelf upon this account, that in heart and affection I am a hearty true *Engliſh*-man. And ſince you are pleas'd to look upon my judgment of the *Engliſh* Clergy no better than a Compliment, I challenge you to tell me, what Nation in the World can boaſt of having ſuch great and worthy Divines as we have?

E. D. Pray how comes it to paſs then, that they cannot pray?

F. P. Who told you they could not? Sure I am that they both can and do pray; and that ſo excellently, that as they ſurpaſs thoſe of other Nations for Learning, ſo likewiſe in Devotion, and the Gift of Prayer; and if you had taken time to peruſe their Books of Devotion, you would never have told me, as you do, *That the preſcribing of a Form of Prayer has been the occaſion why the Miniſters of the Church of*

England *are become ſo dull and ignorant, even to that exceſs, that they cannot pray.*

E. D. However, I think, they are much to blame; for that in their Pulpits, if they pray at all, they diſpatch them in ſo few words, that any one that hears them will be apt to conclude, they cannot pray; but ſhould you once come to *our Meetings, ay, there you would hear Praying indeed.*

F. P. I will not deny, but that commonly our Clergy, in the Pulpit, uſe onely a ſhort Prayer before Sermon; but don't at all deſerve to be blam'd, but rather to be commended, for ſo doing; if we conſider, firſt, that our Clergy chuſe to make uſe of a ſhort Prayer onely before Sermon, becauſe they have found, by woful Experience, that long extemporary Prayers have begot, in moſt People, a diſlike of the Common-prayer, and conſequently

have been the occaſion of thoſe unchriſtian Animoſities, Schiſms and Diviſions, that are ſo rife amongſt us. And, I think, you have no juſt reaſon to blame this pre-caution of theirs, till you have made out, firſt, that the People doe well to undervalue and deſpiſe *the Common-prayer*, and that the Averſion they have for it is a ſufficient ground for Schiſm and Diviſion. A ſecond reaſon why the Miniſters of the Church of *England* uſe ſuch ſhort Prayers is, that by this means they may condeſcend to the weakneſs of the People, leſt an over-long Prayer ſhould weary thoſe who have already attended upon, and join'd their hearts and voices with, the publick Prayers offer'd up to God by the Church. And in the third and laſt place, we ſhall find that there is nothing good or uſefull for us, which the Miniſter hath not already prayed for, nor any thing evil or hurtfull, which he

has not deprecated in the publick Prayers appointed by the Church, which methinks might at leaſt leſſen the fault of our Clergy in your ſight, and ſomewhat allay the bitterneſs of your Cenſure againſt them. And as for your Meetings, where you tell me there is Praying indeed, I muſt freely tell you, that though I never was at any Meeting in my life, yet I have often had an opportunity of hearing your Miniſters pray; but foraſmuch as my temper doth not incline me, and my Religion much leſs, to paſs any offenſive Reflexion upon any ſort of People, therefore I humbly crave leave to be excus'd from giving you my opinion of them.

E. D. Though I cannot but approve of your Modeſty in this regard, yet I ſhould be glad to have you ſpeak out; and therefore I deſire you to tell me freely from your heart, what you think of them; and

whether

whether they do not pray very well?

F. P. Becauſe you urge me, I ſhall, in compliance with your deſires, tell you, and that with all the truth and ſincerity imaginable, that I am ſo far from liking their unpremeditated extemporary Prayers, that I altogether diſapprove them; and above all, am much offended at their way of praying.

E. D. Sure you don't ſpeak from your heart now, as I deſired you would, for if you did, you could not ſay ſo; ſince it is certain that they pray incomparably better than any of your Church-men: one of their unpremeditated Prayers being far beyond all the Prayers that are in your Common-prayer-book.

F. P. Good Sir, I muſt entreat you for once to lay aſide all your Prejudices, and to make uſe of your Reaſon ſo far as to conſider, whether it be not morally impoſſible, that men, who never were brought up

in an Univerſity, and ſcarcely ever had the full inſtruction of a Grammar-ſchool, which may be ſaid of the moſt of your Miniſters, ſhould without any premeditation pray incomparably better than our Churchmen, who have had the beſt means and opportunities in the World to improve their parts and abilities? And whether an extemporary Prayer whined out (I beg your pardon if that word offend you) by an illiterate man, ſhould infinitely ſurpaſs all the Prayers of the Common-prayer-book, which have been compiled by ſome of the wiſeſt and moſt Judicious Divines that ever *England* could boaſt of.

E. D. How ſtrangely you talk now, as if it were impoſſible for any man to pray well that hath not been bred at the Univerſities?

F. P. You miſtake me Sir, this was none of my aſſertion, I onely ſaid, it was morally impoſſible, that illite-

illetrate men ſhould pray incomparably better than thoſe that have been brought up at the Univerſities, whoſe whole buſineſs and employment it is to underſtand the Scripture, and to be converſant in thoſe ſtudies that moſt conduce to true Godlineſs, which ſurely are the beſt means to teach them to pray alſo.

E. D. But the Apoſtles you know were ſimple illiterate men, and yet they could pray infinitely better than all the *Rabbies*, and all the great Doctors of the Synagogue.

F. P. I grant you that, but with all deſire you would conſider, that though the Apoſtles were illiterate men, yet were they extraordinary men, call'd and ſent by God in an extraordinary manner, to bring about an extraordinary work, yea, a Work greater than that of the Creation it ſelf; they were by their Miniſtry to change and renew the face of the whole World, to pluck the

falſe Gods from their Temples, to beat down their Altars, to ſilence their Oracles, to aboliſh their Worſhip, to root out their Cuſtoms, to overcome their Prejudices, and to oppoſe and defeat a Religion, of as long ſtanding as the World it ſelf; a Religion that was in full poſſeſſion of the Spirits of all men, and which by conſequence could engage for her defence whatſoever was authoritative, great or powerfull amongſt all Nations. They were to be the Planters of a new Religion in the World, to brave and challenge all the power of Princes, to ſtand the ſhock of the Sophiſms of Philoſophers, and the Politicks of States-men; to ſtem the violent torrent of the Mobile, and to hold out againſt the Perſecutions of all the wicked. Now that they might be qualified and capacitated for this ſtrange and wonderfull undertaking, God was pleaſed to indow them with many miraculous

Gifts

Gifts and Powers, as of Prophecying, ſpeaking all ſorts of Languages, working of Miracles, *&c.* in order to which the Holy Ghoſt, who is the true and alone Spirit of Prayer, came down upon them, in a viſible and miraculous manner. Which things being ſo, for you to fetch an Argument from the Example of the Apoſtles, either in reſpect of their Perſon, Miſſion or extraordinary and miraculous Gifts, and apply the ſame to your Miniſters, is everywhit as improper, as if you ſhould go about to prove, that you or I can ſtop the Sun in his Courſe, becauſe *Joſhua* did ſo.

E. D. I never intended by producing the Example of the Apoſtles, to prove our Miniſters equal to them, as to their extraordinary gifts and graces; neither do I ſuppoſe, will you dare to compare the *Coiners* of your Liturgy or Common-prayer, with thoſe holy Men, the Apoſtles

of

of our Lord and Saviour?

F. P. I never did; I onely ſaid, that the Compilers of our Liturgy, were ſome of the moſt Pious and Learned men that ever *England* did afford.

E. D. They were no better than bigoted Papiſts.

F. P. How can that be, when it is known that they ſuffered Perſcution, nay, Martyrdom it ſelf, in the defence of the Proteſtant Religion, and ſealed and ratified the Common-prayer, they had compoſed, with their Bloud?

E. D. But, pray Sir, who gave them the power to compoſe the Common-prayer-book?

F. P. They had their Power and Authority from God and the King.

E. D. I ſhall be glad to hear you prove it.

F. P. That I will Sir, for it is no ſuch difficult matter as you may ſuppoſe. I ſay therefore, firſt, that they

they had their power from God; for they being Bishops and Governours of the Church, had an unquestionable Power and Commission, by virtue of their Charge and Office, to redress and reform whatsoever was amiss in the Divine Service; and forasmuch as in some foregoing Ages the Prayers of the Church had been corrupted and adulterated, by inserting doubtfull Stories and Legends, with a superfluous multiplicity of Responsals, Prayers to the Blessed Virgin and other Saints, Prayers for the Dead, vain Repetitions, Commemorations and Synodals, *&c.* they very wisely and prudently cast away all that was Popish and Superstitious, retaining onely what was sound, ancient and edifying, and added some Prayers that were truly Apostolical and Primitive. And besides, they had a special Order and Command from King *Edward* VI. authorizing them so to doe.

E. D.

E. D. I find all your Discourse comes to this, that the Compilers of your Common-prayer-book, onely chop'd and chang'd the *Romish* Liturgy, and out of it, with some Additions of their own, patch'd up the Liturgy which is now used by the Church of *England*, and which you do so much admire. Now you know the Popish Liturgy is no other than their Mass-book, which I think might, to much better purpose, have been quite laid aside, than reform'd and patch'd up again.

F. P. I am not of your opinion, and the Reasons that hinder me are these: First, Those Holy Men we are speaking of, had no Power or Authority committed to them to plant or institute a new Religion, but onely to reform the Abuses that were crept into the Church, and the Corruptions of the publick Worship of God, which is the chiefest part of

the

the Christian Religion: now in this case it is evident, that it was none of their duty or office to take away the whole publick Service or Liturgy, which indeed at that time was very corrupt, though not to that degree, but that some good was still found amongst it, but onely to change what was amiss, to supply the defects of it, and cast away whatsoever was corrupt or superfluous. Secondly, It was great wisedom in them to observe the mean between two extreams, by shunning on the one hand a Spirit of bitterness and hatred against the Party they reformed from; and on the other hand avoiding a sinfull compliance with the corruptions of those, who were so unwilling to part with their Idolatry and Superstition. And farther to illustrate my Argument, I must tell you, that the Reformers of our Church acted according to this commendable Maxim of Christian

ſtian Charity and Moderation, *viz. That in love and condeſcention to the Church of* Rome, *we ought not to reject any thing uſed by them, but what is found contrary to the Word of God:* whereas the Reformers of your Party proceed according to this Rule, That *in hatred and deteſtation of Popery, we ought not to admit the leaſt thing the Papiſts make uſe of in their Divine Service; and onely for this reaſon, becauſe they uſe it.* Now I would fain know of you, which of theſe two you take to be the moſt Chriſtian and Charitable method? and whether the Principle our Reformers went by, be not preferable to that of your Party? The Reaſon is evident beyond diſpute; becauſe our Reformers, by retaining what was good and of primitive Purity in the publick Service of the Romaniſts, and rejecting onely what was manifeſtly corrupt and ſuperſtitious, they left a door open for them, and,

as

as it were, friendly invited them, to leave their Adulterous Church, and to enter into our Communion.

E. D. But pray tell me what great or good effect this Condescension did ever yet produce; for I never understood that this their moderate and designing way of Reforming the Church, has been a means to persuade the Papists to leave their Idolatry and Superstitions, and to become Converts to their Church.

F. P. If I should grant you that the number of Popish Converts to our Church, is not very considerable; will it follow from thence, that the means used for so good and charitable an End, were undue or unlawfull? For though God hitherto hath not been pleased to bless these good means, with the greatest success that might be wish'd for, yet we know not how soon he may; especially, considering that we had never more reason to expect, the total

tal downfall of Popery; which, according to outward appearance, can no way ſo probably be brought about, as by the Papiſts embracing the Proteſtant Religion. Let us therefore take heed of deriding (as you ſeem to do) thoſe lawfull, moderate, and Chriſtian-like methods, the Church of *England* hath made uſe to facilitate the Papiſts Converſion.

E. D. I find then, you take your Common-prayer to be a lawfull, moderate, and Chriſtian-like method or means to facilitate the Converſion of the Papiſts.

F. P. I do ſo; and I queſtion not but, in due time, it will prove very effectual that way to the ſtopping of the mouths of all gain-ſayers.

E. D. Ay, you may look for it long enough, I ſuppoſe; and if by great chance it ſhould ever prove to be an effectual means, I dare ſay, for all that, it will never be a law-

full

ſull one; for, to ſpeak freely, and without mincing the matter, I am of opinion, that, though it may be lawfull to uſe ſome Form of Prayer, yet it is altogether unlawfull to uſe that Form, which is now in vogue amongſt you.

F. P. Then I find you are not altogether irreconcilable to the Lawfulneſs of Praying by Forms; but you are not ſatisfied with the Forms we uſe. I ſhall be glad to hear the Grounds of your diſſatisfaction; as hoping by this means to have an opportunity offer'd me, to enlarge my ſelf more in the Praiſe of our Common-prayer, than hitherto I have had occaſion to do.

E. D. I know the humour of *French-men* is to be complaiſant and *complimental*; and ſo very probably you deſign, in compliment to the Church of *England*, to fall down to the Common-prayer, the great Idol of the *Engliſh* Clergy; as you have already

already expreſs'd your great Reſpects for their dull and prophane Prieſts.

F. P. I beg of you, Sir, let us diſcourſe without Prejudice or Paſſion; and be ſo kind as to tell me calmly and friendly, what Objections you have againſt our Common-prayer-book in particular.

E. D. Before I give you the Particular Objections I have againſt the Common-prayer-book, I ſhall premiſe this General Obſervation, That your Common-prayer is ſo bad, that there is nothing good in it; no, nor any thing that is ſo much as tolerable.

F. P. How ſtrangely you and I differ in Opinion? As for my part, I really think there is nothing in it, but what is very good.

E. D. If you can prove that, as I deſire you would, *Eris mihi magnus Apollo*; for indeed you will do more than all your Clergy-men that ever

I diſcours'd with, and more than all the Books that treat of this Subject, have been able to do.

F. P. If the caſe be ſo indeed, I ſhould be loath to undertake the task: For if none of our Clergy, that you have diſcours'd with, nor any of thoſe excellent Books, written in the Defence of our Liturgy, have been able to convince you of the goodneſs and uſefulneſs thereof, it would be folly for me to attempt it; for I am very ſenſible, that my Parts and Abilities, are far below any one of our Clergy, that you have had to deal with; and to ſpeak the truth, 'tis from them and their Writings I have acquired the beſt part of that little learning, and inſight into theſe things, that I have.

E. D. I hope you are as modeſt a Man as your diſcourſe would import; beſides, being a *French* Proteſtant, you, as ſuch, can have neither publick nor private Reaſon, to bear

any

any ill-will to our Party; wherefore I look upon you as an unbiaſs'd Perſon, without Prejudice or Partiality, and conſequently fit to be diſcours'd with, about the matter in queſtion, between us: And indeed all this makes me the more deſirous to hear the Arguments you can produce for proving your Aſſertion, That there is nothing in the Common-prayer-book, but what is very good.

F. P. I thought all this while that you intended to propound your Objections againſt the Common-prayer; and that my onely buſineſs would have been to Anſwer them.

E. D. I ſuppoſe we may do both theſe things at once; for if you pleaſe to tell me what you find ſo extraordinary good in the Common-prayer, I ſhall alſo, on my part, declare what I diſlike in it.

F. P. Be

F. P. Be it ſo. And to the end we may proceed with ſome order, let us curſorily reade over the Common-prayer-book, which I have here with me.

E. D. This indeed will be a good way to enable us to judge the better concerning it; and therefore I am very free to run it over with you; onely muſt deſire you, not to take it ill, if now and then I interrupt you with my Objections againſt any part of it.

F. P. What you deſire, is contain'd in our agreement for according to it; I am to tell you, what I approve of in our Liturgy; and you are to tell me, what you diſlike in it, by propounding your Objections againſt it.

E. D. Very well; and in ſo doing we ſhall finely Anatomize theſe Relicks of Popery. But it is your turn to begin.

F. P. The

F. P. The first thing I meet with in our Common-prayer-book, are *some Sentences* of the Holy Scriptures, of which the Minister is to reade one or more, before he proceeds to the Prayers or Devotions, which seems to me to be very proper and usefull; for certainly we can never better begin God's Service, than with his own Words.

Next follows an *Exhortation*, wherein is represented to the People, the *End* of their present assembling or meeting together; which is, as the Exhortation expresseth it, *To confess their Sins, to render Thanks to God, to set forth his Praise, and to ask those things that be necessary either for Soul or Body:* and towards the end thereof, we are informed and directed how to perform these holy and bounden Duties; *viz.* sincerely and reverently, *with a pure heart, and humble voice:* which caution is very necessary, if we consider

der how prone Men are, without any due preparation of themſelves, to ruſh into the preſence of the great God, who is a conſuming fire, and before whom they ought to appear with the moſt reverential awe and trembling; as likewiſe how apt we are to utter any thing before him, without conſidering, that he is in Heaven, and we on Earth; and how negligent we generally are, in diſpoſing and qualifying our ſelves, for the acceptable performance of the Sacred Duties of our Religious Worſhip.

E. D. So far all is pretty tolerable; but by and by, we ſhall meet with *a great deal of ſtuff.*

F. P. Not to inſiſt now upon your plain contradicting of your ſelf; for whereas but juſt now, you poſitively aſſerted, that there was nothing, ſo much as tolerable in our Liturgy, you now plainly con-

ſeſs the contrary; I ſhall onely deſire you, when we come to thoſe places, where your great deal of ſtuff lies, that you would ſtop me, for I ſhall be glad to hear the Objections you have againſt any part of it; and in the mean time I proceed to ſpeak of the *Confeſſion*, which is the next thing that occurs in our Liturgy. The Miniſter and People having been thus ſtirr'd up by the foregoing Exhortation to compoſe their Thoughts, and prepare their Hearts for a due offering up of their Morning or Evening Sacrifice; the next thing they do, is, to fall down on their knees, *confeſſing* in a ſolemn and humble manner their Sins unto Almighty God, earneſtly imploring his Grace and Mercy for the Pardon of them. And this, according to my apprehenſion, is very proper and neceſſary in our approaches to God; for ſince it is our Sins that ſeparate be-

between God and us, and hide his face from us; we can do no better than, in the first place, to beg of our most mercifull Father the Remission of them, that he may utterly efface them, and put them out of the way of interrupting the free course of his gracious and benign Communications and Influences. *If I regard*, saith the Psalmist, *iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer*, Psal. 66. v. 16. Moreover, it is very reasonable, before we beg any favour from God, to entreat for a removal of those Evils we groan under, *viz.* the guilt and punishment of our Sins.

E. D. I suppose you did not observe this method in the Common-prayer the Protestants use in *France.*

F. P. Yes, but we did. Our Ministers always begin Divine Service with a Sentence of the Holy Scrip-

tures; and I ſhall not ſcruple to tell you, that it is expreſly the ſame with which the Roman Office of the Maſs beginneth, (and yet we have had the good luck, never to be cenſur'd as Popiſhly affected upon this account;) and in the next place, they proceed to exhort and invite the People to accompany them to the Throne of the heavenly Grace, repeating after them a Confeſſion of Sins, in ſubſtance much the ſame with that in the Engliſh Liturgy.

E. D. But your Miniſters did not reade theſe Prayers out of a Book, as the ſcandalous and lazy Clergy here in *England* do.

F. P. I find you make it your buſineſs to affront our Clergy at every turn, and ſuppoſe the moſt abuſive and ſcurrilous Language to be good enough for them; yet queſtion much, whether you would take it well to be paid in the ſame

coin;

coin; however, I cannot but tell you my thoughts, which incline me to believe you have learned these ill manners from your own Minister.

E. D. What, I hope you will not accuse our Minister of being unmannerly? For I dare say he is as courteous and civil, as affable and obliging, and, in a word, as much a Gentleman as any Man I know of.

F. P. He shewed himself to be so indeed, when the other day being in his Pulpit, thought fit to interrupt the series of his discourse to give the lye, to a person entring into the Meeting, who, it seems, had reported something, as he conceiv'd, to his disadvantage.

E. D. Ay, this is a fine story, forg'd at pleasure by some of your Clergy-men, to expose and make our Ministers odious.

F. P. 'Tis so far from being a story, that I am ready to justifie the truth of it, by many credible Ear-witnesses. But to return to the matter in hand; though first I must tell you in answer to your question, that our *French* Ministers always use their Books in repeating of their Common-prayer, reading it word by word, and yet have been so happy, as to escape the Censure of being either *scandalous* or *lazy* upon that account.

E. D. I onely ask you this question by the bye. But let us see what follows.

F. P. After the *Confession*, which is the last thing we have spoke of, follows the *Absolution*, wherein the Minister declares and pronounces to all those *that truly repent and unfeignedly believe the holy Gospel, the Absolution of their sins*; and no doubt, supposing our Confession to have

have been ſincere and hearty, the Miniſter has good reaſon to declare our Sins are abſolved, upon theſe two Evangelical conditions of *Faith* and *Repentance*. But to the end no ſcruple may be left in this matter, be pleas'd to obſerve, that the Miniſter doth not here Abſolve in his own name, but publiſheth a Pardon *in Nomine Domini*, in the Name and Authority of the Lord God. He doth not ſay *I*, but *He pardoneth*, &c.

E. D. This Form of Abſolution, as being onely declaratory, may paſs well enough: for, as I underſtand it now, the Miniſter onely declares that Pardon may be had, and on what terms. All this may be born with, and therefore you may go on.

F. P. The Lord's-prayer follows next; and that, if I be not greatly miſtaken, very properly: Firſt, be-

cauſe having hitherto prepared our ſelves by *Confeſſion* and *Abſolution*, we may now more freely take the boldneſs to call God our Father, and addreſs our ſelves to him in that perfect Form of Prayer which his Beloved Son has taught us. Secondly, the Lord's-prayer being the ground-work and foundation, on which all our Prayers and Petitions ſhould be built, we can never do better, than to begin our Prayers with this, which was compoſed by the onely begotten Son of God, and indited by Wiſdom it ſelf, to be a pattern and model to all our Devotions.

E. D. But you cannot ſay that you make uſe of the Lord's-prayer in the firſt place, and before your other Petitions, ſince you have already uſed ſeveral before it.

F. P. Whatſoever has been hitherto performed either by Miniſter or People,

People, is rather a Preparation for Prayer, than Prayer it ſelf: for if you——

E. D. You need ſay no more; for indeed it is no great matter whether you uſe it firſt or laſt: the Queſtion onely is, whether it ought to be us'd at all? I own it to be a matter of great moment, which therefore ought not to be raſhly determin'd; though, for my part, I am more inclinable to take it as a directory for the matter of our Prayer, than for a Form; and the rather, becauſe one of the Evangeliſts ſeems to intimate as much, by uſhering in the Lord's-prayer with theſe words of our Saviour, *After this manner, therefore pray ye*, Luke 6. v. 9.

F. P. I fear your Miniſter is not ſo cautious as you are in this matter; for in ſome of his Sermons he hath, if not raſhly, at leaſt very poſitively aſſerted, that the Lord's-

prayer is not to be uſed as a Form of Prayer, but onely as a Direction; and conſequently takes great care not to make uſe of it in his Meeting; though, as I have been informed from very credible hands, he uſeth it in his Family-prayers; but how to reconcile *P* with *B* in this caſe; *P*, when he is in his Meeting, and *B* when he is at home, I leave to your conſideration; I onely wiſh there be not ſome worldly intereſt at the bottom that ſways him. And as for what you alledge, that one of the Evangeliſts ſaith, *after this manner*, &c. I anſwer, that theſe words do not forbid or oppoſe the uſing of it as a Form, or the repeating of it in the ſelf-ſame words; for he that repeats the ſame words, ſaith after this manner, though every one that ſaith after this manner, do not always repeat the ſame words. So that he who ſaith the very words

themſelves, hath two Evangeliſts to warrant and juſtifie him; whereas he that does not, hath but one. I ſhall onely add, that the Lord's-prayer, is uſed by the Church of Chriſt all the World over; and it cannot but be very comfortable and beneficial to us to bear a part in this great and Univerſal Conſort.

E. D. But ſuppoſe I ſhould grant you, that the Lord's-prayer may be us'd in the Morning; yet you cannot but allow me, that it ought not to be us'd at Night, becauſe it is ridiculous to beg our daily Bread of God, when we have eaten our Supper, and are ready to go to bed.

F. P. Though this Objection be too light and frothy, and not at all comporting with the Sacredneſs of the things we are treating of; yet ſhall not this hinder me from anſwering it ſeriouſly; and the rather, becauſe I am pretty well aſſur'd you have

have borrow'd it from one of your Neighbouring Miniſters, who not long ſince Preaching in this Town, produc'd it as a moſt convincing and unanſwerable Argument, to prove, that the Lord s-prayer was not to be uſed as a Form: but certainly this Gentleman ſhewed hereby, that he was no great Textuary, ſince any Woman, except perhaps his own Mother, (who, I am told, has been the onely Tutor he ever had) could have taught him, that by *Bread* in this place, as in many other Texts of Scripture, we are not onely to underſtand *Meat* and *Drink*, but alſo *Repoſe* and *Sleep*, *Clothes* and *Shelter*, *Health* and *Wealth*, and, in a word, whatſoever is neceſſary to ſupport and ſupply our frail natures. To this I might add, that the word we render *Daily*, according to its moſt proper and exact ſignification, do's not denote the

the preſent time, but that to come; ſo that when we pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*, tis as much as if we ſhould ſay, Vouchſafe us all thoſe things that are neceſſary and ſufficient for the ſupport of the remaining part of our lives: and this we pray that we may receive *this day*, that is, as St. *Luke* interprets it, *Day by day*. Laſtly, I might alſo here take notice, that by *Bread*, we are not onely to underſtand our Bodily ſuſtenance, but alſo the food of our Souls.

E.D. Theſe Obſervations of yours I muſt confeſs are new things to me, and more than ever I heard before. But I deſire you to proceed.

F.P. After the *Lord's Prayer* follow ſome ſhort and proper Ejaculations, for the Divine Aſſiſtance in the work we are about; and in which the People bear a part, the Miniſter praying in the words of holy *David*,

David, *O Lord*, *open thou our lips*; and the People answering, *And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.* The Minister again, *O Lord*, *make speed to save us*; and the People, *O Lord*, *make haste to help us.* Neither can you, I suppose, find fault with this Order of the Church, in assigning this place to these holy Breathings, or ejaculatory Desires, *viz.* before the *Psalms*, *Lessons* and *Collects*, and immediately after the *Confession* and *Absolution*; thereby intimating that our Sins have shut our Mouths and closed our Lips; putting us into an utter incapacity of praising his most holy Name, and expressing our bounden thankfulness, till he himself be pleased to open our Mouths and Lips to utter his glory. Again, when we cast an eye upon the Sacredness of those Duties we are about, and the great opposition we may expect from the Devil

and

and our evil Hearts, in the performance of them, we have all the reason in the World to cry mightily to God, *to make haste to save us and deliver us*; to the end that by his Divine assistance we may be enabled worthily to celebrate his praise, and acceptably perform the great Work we are engaged in.

E. D. These short Sentences you so much commend, forasmuch as they are all taken out of Scripture, are well enough in themselves: but I can no ways approve this chopping and mincing of Prayers between the Minister and the People, for this makes *them to be liker Charms than Christian Prayers.*

F. P. Well, you are a wonderfull Christian, if I may judge of you by your Charitable and Evangelical expressions: for, if from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, I find

find you have as good an opinion of our Church as your Minister hath.

E. D. Pray, what is that you have to say against our Minister?

F. P. Nothing at all, for indeed I am asham'd for his sake to mention it.

E. D. Speak out man, I know what you would be at; is it not this, that our Minister hath said the same, *viz.* that your *Prayers are liker Charms than Christian prayers?*

F. P. I will not be positive that he used the self-same expressions: but this I dare affirm, that he used some as bad, if not worse, and which have a great affinity with these words of yours.

E. D. Pray, Sir, tell me plainly, what it was he said?

F. P. Since you will needs have it, I shall tell you, that he was so kind and charitable as to imply in one of his Sermons, that *our Cathe-*

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dral was the Devil's Chapel. These are his words, *God has no Church, but the Devil has a Chapel; I had almost said, a Cathedral.* A sublime and worthy Sentence, full of Christian Love and Charity, and well becoming such a Minister of the Gospel. And if we join your Aphorism to his, we may challenge the World to shew us any thing like it; for so it will make out this favourable Judgment of our Church, *God has no Church, but the Devil has a Chapel; I had almost said, a Cathedral; and the Prayers that are used there, are liker Charms, than Christian prayers.*

E. D. I don't matter what you say or judge of me, but your having such frequent flings at our Minister gives me great reason to suspect, you have a grudge or secret hatred against him.

F. P. I

F. P. I can aſſure you 'tis far from that; for I am ſo free from bearing any ill-will towards him, that I can ſafely deſire all the harm I wiſh him may fall upon my ſelf: and I ſincerely proteſt, that the onely motive which makes me reflect upon ſome of his abuſive expreſſions is, the love I have for that Church which he is ſo eagerly bent to expoſe and viliſie; and indeed who could ſee his Mother ſo groſly abuſed, without being mov'd at it.

E. D. Seeing you are ſo nice and ſqueamiſh, I ſhall henceforth avoid any expreſſions that may offend or give you an occaſion to reflect upon our Miniſter or my ſelf.

F. P. I could wiſh it were in your power to uſe that moderation, though in doing it, you would doe no more than what I have already ſeveral times begged of you; and had you but comply'd with my re-

reiterated deſires, you would have ſpar'd me the trouble of repreſenting to you the Sarcaſtical Language your Miniſter has very often and very unreaſonably made uſe of againſt us.

E. D. In kindneſs to you I ſhall propound my Objection in other terms. I ſay therefore, that I cannot approve, that the People ſhould anſwer the Miniſter, and by turns repeat ſome part of the publick Prayers; for though I know it was allowed amongſt the *Jews* to ſing by turns, anſwering one another, yet I cannot find that the ſame order was ever approv'd of among Chriſtians.

F. P. After thanks returned for your kindneſs to me, I muſt tell you that your Objection is ſo far from making for you, that it makes againſt you. For as I perceive, you are not well acquainted with the order

der the *Jews* obſerved in their publick Worſhip, becauſe if ſo, you would never have produc'd this Argument to condemn the practice of our Church. True it is, that it was the cuſtome of the *Jews* to ſing by turns, and anſwer one another; but you never obſerved that this was a privilege granted to the Prieſts and Levites onely: now this Argument of yours plainly juſtifies the order of our Church; for if the Prieſts and Levites under the Old Law had the Prerogative of bearing a part in offering up the publick Prayers and Praiſes, none can deny, but that Chriſtians, both Miniſters and People, have the ſame, if not a greater, privilege; foraſmuch as every true Chriſtian is a Prieſt, and that of a higher order than thoſe under the Old Law; for if we will believe St. *Peter*, 1 Ep. chap. 2. verſ. 9. *We are a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood:*

hood: and *John*, Revel. 1. 6. declares that, *Jesus Christ has made us Kings and Priests unto God.*

E. D. I perceive then you take it to be a great honour or privilege for Christians to have leave to answer their Ministers, and to have a share with them in repeating the publick Prayers.

F. P. I do so; and have great reason for it too.

E. D. I know well that you Church-men, both Ministers and People, are very ambitious of honour; but this is not the thing we must look for, especially in our Prayers, but rather edification and benefit; now what benefit can you propound to your self from this answering of your Minister, and pronouncing some part of the publick Prayers?

F. P. The benefit which thereby accrews to us is very considerable; for

for by this means we do not onely expreſs our full conſent to all the Miniſter's Prayers, without which we cannot reaſonably expect any advantage from them: but beſides, by this method of our Church we captivate the Peoples attention, reſtrain their vain and rambling thoughts, and oblige them to be attentive to what the Miniſter ſaith, that they may be ready to return the proper Reſponſals. Whereas when the People bear no ſhare in the Divine Service, and have no part to act in it, they are more at leiſure to entertain vain and frivolous fancies, and too too often profane and laſcivious thoughts come in flocks to devour their Sacrifice: and to tell you my mind plainly, I take it, that the neglect of theſe Reſponſals, is the true cauſe of ſo much inadvertency, lazy poſtures and drowzineſs, as now commonly diſcover themſelves in

in thoſe who frequent the Houſe of God, and appear in his preſence, whom the holy Angels adore with veiled faces; which as it is a diſhonour to God and a diſcouragement to the Miniſter, ſo it is of great prejudice to their own Souls. Now to put the queſtion to your ſelf, you cannot deny me, but that way of Praying which moſt engageth our attention, is the beſt, and therefore ought to be preferred before any other; and it is evident beyond diſpute, that that way of Praying, where the People bear a part and anſwer in their courſe, is the moſt proper to make them attentive and heedfull to the Work they are about; and therefore I leave you to judge, how commendable the Practice of our Church is, in this regard.

E. D. We ſhall by and by have a further opportunity of ſpeaking to this particular; wherefore you may now proceed if you pleaſe.

F. P. Af-

F.P. After the ſhort Prayers and Reſponſals now mentioned, follows the Doxology; *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son*, &c. which is both a ſound Form of praiſing and glorifying the eternal and tri-une God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and a ſhort Creed or Confeſſion of our Faith, concerning the Trinity in Unity. And if you demand of me, why it is placed here in the cloſe of the Penitential part of our Prayers? I anſwer, Becauſe having before confeſſed our Sins, and humbly entreated mercy and remiſſion for them; and being now in full hope that our mercifull Father has graciouſly heard and granted our requeſts, we immediately change our Prayers into Praiſes, and our Supplications into Thankſgivings, and with tranſports of Joy and Gratitude we ſound forth our *Glory be to the Father*, for it is he who pardons our Sins; *and to the*

Son,

Son, becauſe 'tis for his ſake they are pardoned; *and to the Holy Ghoſt*, who alone aſſures us thereof. And the Miniſter afterwards, as if this were not enough, (becauſe in the *Gloria Patri* we more particularly worſhip the Trinity in Unity, and not the Unity in Trinity,) calls upon the People again to adore the Unity, ſaying, *Praiſe ye the Lord*; to which the People anſwer, *The Lord's Name be praiſed*; which words contain the Chriſtian Hallelujahs or Songs of praiſe and triumph, for the abſolution and remiſſion of their Sins: or elſe, if you will, you may take them for a Preface or Entrance to the Reading of the Pſalms.

E. D. You may take them for what you pleaſe; as for my part, I don't concern my ſelf about them, and therefore you may go on.

F. P. In the Morning Service the Psalms are ushered in with the *Venite*, *O come let us sing unto the Lord*, &c. as being an Exhortatory Psalm, whereby we continue mutually to invite and encourage each other worthily to adore and worship the Eternal God. And that this Psalm is very well placed here, appears, first, Because by it we are informed what we are to doe; and, secondly, how we ought to behave our selves in the performance of the succeeding Offices or Duties. The former of these, *viz.* what we are to doe, we have in these words; *Sing unto the Lord*; *Come before his presence*; *Serve and worship him*; and, lastly, *Hear his Voice*, or, his most Holy Word. The latter, How we are to perform these Duties, is thus express'd, We are to *sing unto the Lord*, *heartily rejoicing*

in the ſtrength of our ſalvation; to *come before his preſence with thankſgiving*, with a gratefull ſenſe and humble acknowledgment of all his Benefits; ſerve and worſhip him with all becoming Reverence and Veneration; *falling down on our faces*, *and kneeling before the Lord our Maker*; not *hardning our hearts when we hear his voice*, but receiving it with Faith and Obedience. And thus we proceed to the *Pſalms* appointed for the day, the Church having ordered them to be read over once every Month.

E. D. Pray tell me the reaſon why they are appointed to be read oftner than any other part of Holy Scripture?

F. P. Becauſe they are moſt accommodated for Prayer and Devotion, and conſequently of a more

continual uſe than any other part of God's Word. The ignorant will find here profitable inſtruction and information; the wicked earneſt exhortations and ſevere warnings; the poor and afflicted will meet with ſutable Prayers and Petitions to beg the good things they want, as well as to deprecate the evils they groan under; and the rich and proſperous will be furniſh'd with Thankſgivings and joyfull Songs of Praiſe. Indeed the whole contexture of them ſhews them to be fitted and ſuited to all perſons in all circumſtances, whether young or old, Kings or Subjects, Nobles or Commons, in proſperity or adverſity, in a wealthy and comfortable, or in a pinching and afflicted condition; and they are proportioned with that exactneſs to theſe ſeveral circumſtances, as if they had been made on purpoſe to expreſs and repreſent every one's particular ſtate and condition. *E. D.*

E. D. I muſt own there is ſomewhat of truth in what you have ſaid concerning the *Pſalms*; but one thing I find that ſpoils all, which is your ſilly way of reading them by turns, the Miniſter reading one Verſe, and the People anſwering another; which certainly is a confus'd, if not a ſcandalous way of praiſing God.

F. P. What you are pleas'd to call confus'd and ſcandalous, is in my opinion very *edifying* and *heavenly*; and my opinion is grounded upon Reaſon; for this way of reading or ſinging *Pſalms* by turns, as hath been partly already hinted, is extremely well ſuited to excite each others Affections, and to encreaſe our Emulation, making us, as it were, to ſtrive to outvie each other in Zeal and Devotion, and to contend who

ſhall worſhip and praiſe God with moſt earneſtneſs and fervency. Now this holy Emulation cannot but be very *profitable and edifying*; yea, and Heavenly too, becauſe it comes neareſt to the Pattern of Heavenly and Angelical Adoration; for thus we reade that the Seraphims cry to each other by turns, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hoſts*, &c. *Iſai.* 6. 3.

E. D. Well, but I have another Objection againſt your way of reading the *Pſalms*; and that is, that at the end of every one of them you repeat the *Gloria Patri*, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son*, &c. which certainly is a very vain repetition.

F. P. I am not of your opinion; for if you obſerve this Doxology is not applied twice to the ſame ſubject; for though we repeat it conſtantly at the cloſing of every *Pſalm*, yet,

yet, becauſe they moſt commonly differ and vary in their ſubjects, for you will hardly find two *Pſalms* together of the ſame Argument; ſome being *Pſalms* of *Doctrine and Inſtruction*, ſome of *Confeſſion of Sins*, ſome of *Profeſſion of Faith*, ſome of *Supplication and Prayer*, ſome of *Praiſes and Thankſgiving*. And foraſmuch as every one of theſe Arguments contain ſufficient and powerfull motives to ſtir up our Hearts and Affections to bleſs and glorifie God, therefore the cloſing of every *Pſalm* with this Doxology, *Glory be to the Father*, &c. cannot be judged vain and improper, but rather very proper and edifying.

After the reading or ſinging of the *Pſalms*, we proceed to reade the *Leſſons*, the one out of the Old Teſtament, and the other out of the New; which order affords this great conveniency, amongſt ſeveral others,

that by this means the Old Teſtament is read over once, and the New Teſtament thrice, every Year.

E. D. This is a great miſtake of yours, whether wilſull or no, I ſhall not enquire, for the Book of *Chronicles* is never read, as well as many particular Chapters of ſome other Books.

F. P. I confeſs the Books of *Chronicles* are not read, but the reaſon of it is plain and evident, becauſe for the moſt part they are but a repetition of the Books of *Kings*, which are read in their courſe: and if any Chapters of other Books be omitted, 'tis either becauſe they contain little elſe but a repetition of what is gone before, or becauſe they treat of the Genealogies, Ceremonies and Laws of the *Jews*, which chiefly concern'd them, as being now antiquated and

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of little uſe under the Goſpel.

E. D. Pray why do you reade the *Apocryphal* Books then, which certainly are of as little uſe and concern as thoſe Books and Chapters you omit in the courſe of your *Leſſons?*

F. P. I don't think ſo, for though they be not Canonical, they are ſuch as may be read with Profit and Edification, in that they contain many true and pious Hiſtories or Relations of the Lives and Actions of ſeveral great and excellent Perſons, whoſe worthy and glorious Examples are very proper to affect our Hearts, and raiſe up in us an ardent Deſire and holy Emulation to imitate their tranſcendent Virtues, to expreſs their untainted Innocence, and copy their unſhaken Conſtancy, Courage and Magnanimity. Moreover we find

there moſt exquiſite Precepts of Morality, directing and informing of us in the Practice of all vertuous Actions, teaching us how to order our Lives, Manners and Converſation, and recommending to us the lovelineſs and excellence of Vertue, as well as repreſenting the deformity and miſery of Vice and Wickedneſs.

E. D. But, if I be not miſtaken, you do not reade the firſt and ſecond Leſſon immediately one after another.

F. P. True, for after the firſt Morning Leſſon we ſay or ſing the *Te Deum*, *We praiſe thee, O God*, &c. or the *Benedicite*; *O all ye works of the Lord*, *Bleſs ye the Lord*, &c. both of which are the moſt excellent and heavenly Hymns that ever were fram'd by Men; each of them being

being a moſt complete Form of Thankſgiving, Praiſe and Adoration. After the ſecond Morning Leſſon we repeat the Song of *Zacharias*, or elſe the 100 *Pſalm*, both of which are not onely Divine and unqueſtionable, but alſo extremely proper to inflame our Hearts with Love and Gratitude to God, for all his unutterable Goodneſs beſtowed upon us. In the Evening Service, after the firſt Leſſon, the Church appoints the Song of the Bleſſed Virgin, or the 98 *Pſalm*; and after the ſecond Leſſon the 67 *Pſalm*, or the Song of old *Simeon*; all which for the Reaſons juſt now mentioned, cannot but be acceptable to God, and edifying to thoſe that attend his Worſhip.

E. D. But what probable reaſon can you give for inſerting and intermixing theſe Songs of Praiſe with your Leſſons? *E. P.*

F. P. The Church has appointed the Repetition of these Sacred and Seraphick Hymns, to be us'd as a solemn Form of Thanksgiving, for those unspeakable Mercies, and heavenly Blessings and good things, revealed and promised to us in his Word, newly read to us; and it is but fitting and seemly, that after we have heard God graciously speaking to us, we should in gratitude eccho forth our Praises and Thanks to him; and this we do in the Hymns now mentioned.

E. D. Some of these Hymns, I think, might be allow'd; but there be two thrust in amongst them, which seem to me very improper; and that is the Song of the Virgin *Mary*, for bearing Christ in her Womb; and that of Old *Simeon*, for seeing Jesus Christ in the Flesh, and holding

holding him in his Arms: Now ſince theſe are extraordinary Caſes, which reach none of us; therefore I conclude the uſe of them ſomewhat ſtrange and extravagant.

F. P. To begin with your firſt Objection: I readily own that we have not the ſame occaſion to uſe this Hymn, as the Bleſſed Virgin had; for God the Word his taking Fleſh in her Womb, was a priviledge peculiar to her alone: Yet pray conſider, that when we in all humility, with Obedience and Faith, receive the Word of God read to us; or as St. *Luke* phraſeth it, *Chap.* 11. 28. *When we hear the Word of God, and keep it*, we do conceive Chriſt by Faith; for according to St. *Paul's* doctrine, *Gal.* 4. 19. 'tis by hearing and keeping the Word of God that *Chriſt is formed in us*; not Carnally, but Spiritually: Wherefore we are

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as much obliged, after a due hearing of God's Word, to break forth into a holy *Magnificat*, *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord*, becauſe Chriſt is formed in us ſpiritually, as the Bleſſed Virgin was, becauſe Chriſt was formed in her according to the Fleſh.

And as to your ſecond Objection, I might tell you, that this Hymn of Old *Simeon* is frequently us'd in our *French* Proteſtant Churches, as being commonly ſung every Lord's-day: but if this Authority do not ſatisfie you, I ſhall give you a reaſon why the Church of *England*, after the reading of the ſecond Leſſon at Evening-prayer, orders the rehearſing the Song of this Bleſſed Man; for though indeed in the reading of the New Teſtament we do not behold Chriſt with our bodily Eyes, as *Simeon* did, yet may we with the ſpiritual Eyes of our Faith

ſee

ſee that *Salvation* he then ſaw; and that more clearly, becauſe it is now more fully manifeſted: and therefore upon this account we have the ſame reaſon to ſay with him; *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant to depart in peace, for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation*, &c.

E. D. I perceive you have a peculiar way of applying the Scriptures to your ſelves: But let us examine what is next.

F. P. The next thing that follows is, the Confeſſion of our Faith, commonly called the Apoſtle's Creed.

E. D. But, I ſuppoſe, you do not believe the Apoſtles made it?

F. P. Though ſtrong and convincing Arguments might be alledged to prove them the Inditers or Compo-

Compoſers of it; yet I am reſolved, at preſent, not to differ with you about it; and the rather, becauſe I am ſure you will agree with me; that as long as it comprehends nothing but what the Apoſtles have taught us to believe, and believed themſelves, it may very well, of juſt right, be called the Apoſtle's Creed.

E. D. But what particular reaſon hath your Church to place it after the Leſſons?

F. P. Becauſe having heard ſome Chapters out of the Word of God read to us; it is but fit that we now make a publick profeſſion of our Belief of the main and fundamental Truths therein contained; which cannot be better done, than by repeating the Articles of the Apoſtle's Creed; which is not onely a Compendium of the Goſpel, but of all Holy Writ.

E. D. But

E. D. But why is it you repeat it ſo often, twice a day at leaſt, Morning and Evening?

F. P. Truly it can never be repeated too often; and I am ſure our *French* Proteſtants thought ſo, whoſe Example, if it ſhould not convince you, I hope the following Reaſons may; becauſe it ſerves to expreſs our *Loyalty* to God, and our *Unity* among our ſelves, and with the Catholick Church; it is a Touch-ſtone to diſcover, whether we continue in the number of Chriſt's Diſciples, and in Unity and Concord with one another; it is our Watch-word, our Badge, Mark and Character, whereby we may diſtinguiſh Friends from Foes, true Believers from Infidels and Hereticks; and therefore, as was ſaid before, it cannot be too often repeated. But before we proceed further,

ther, we may here take notice, that upon certain Festival-days the *Athanasian* Creed is read, instead of that of the Apostle's.

E. D. Is there any thing more in the *Athanasian* Creed, than in that of the Apostle's?

F. P. Onely this, that in the *Athanasian* Creed, the Mysteries of the most Blessed Trinity, and of the Incarnation of the Son of God, are more at large asserted, explained and unfolded, and that in the most sound, plain and perspicuous terms, those sublime and incomprehensible Mysteries are capable of. After which, we proceed to this devout, hearty and mutual Salutation of the Minister and the People; the Minister saying, *The Lord be with you*; and the People answering, *And with thy Spirit.*

E. D. For

E. D. For my part, I cannot approve of the Minister and People thus saluting one another, because it looks too much like Compliment; which though perhaps it may agree very well with your *French* humour, yet is not at all agreeable to mine.

F. P. If you'll quarrel at this, you must quarrel with the Word of God, and with the language of the Holy Ghost in Scripture; for most certain it is, that this Salutation is taken thence, *viz.* what the Minister saith out of the Book of *Ruth* 2. 4. and used by St. *Paul*, 2 *Thess.* 3. 16. and what the People answer out of the Epistle to the *Galat.* 6. 18. Which words, whether consider'd in themselves, or with respect to the end they are design'd for, are of exceeding great and good use; for now we are entring upon a new part of Divine

Divine Service, *viz.* that of Prayer; but ſeeing that without God's aid and aſſiſtance it is impoſſible, either for Miniſter or People to acquit themſelves rightly of this duty, which is of ſo great concern to the whole Congregation, Miniſter as well as People; wherefore they begin by praying each for other, humbly ſupplicating God to aſſiſt them in their preſent undertaking: the Miniſter beginning with this ſhort Prayer for the People, *The Lord be with you*; lifting up your Hearts, and raiſing your Devotions, that my Prayers may not be in vain for you; and the People, in acknowledgment of the Miniſter's hearty good will, and as being themſelves extreamly concern'd in the work he is about, anſwer his Prayer, with this good wiſh, *And with thy Spirit*; to the end your Prayers may be ſo fervent, that you and we may reap the

the fruit and benefit of thoſe Petitions you are now going to offer up to God for the whole Congregation. And having thus, both Miniſter and People, implored the Divine Preſence and Aſſiſtance in the great Work we are entring upon; we do next in a moſt humble and ſolemn manner addreſs our ſelves to each Perſon of the moſt Bleſſed Trinity to have Mercy upon us, *viz.* that our Sins and Tranſgreſſions may not hinder our Prayers and Petitions from being graciouſly received and accepted at the Throne of Grace; ſaying, *Lord have mercy upon us. Chriſt have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us.* After which, we addreſs our ſelves to God, in that excellent Form of Prayer our Saviour hath taught us.

E. D. But me-thinks, foraſmuch as you have uſed this Prayer already,

dy, that the reiterating of it, must needs be accounted a vain repetition, condemned by our Saviour in *Matth.* 6. 6.

F. P. True it is, that our Church has appointed the Lord's-prayer to be used more than once in our Liturgy, but that the reiterating of it, cannot come under the lash of those vain repetitions, forbid by our Saviour, will appear, if you consider, that we repeat it onely in each distinct Service of the Church: before we made use of it as a Confirmation, and further assurance of the Absolution of our Sins, and now we repeat it as the ground and foundation of our following Petitions. Besides, the frequent repetition of it, ought not to be called vain, since (as hath been before observed) Christ himself prayed thrice, using the same words; and certainly the best

beſt of Prayers cannot be uſed too often.

E. D. But I dare ſay, if ſo be the Proteſtants in *France* made uſe of the Lord's-prayer at all; yet they did not repeat it ſo often as you do.

F. P. I have taken notice before, that you are very ready to entertain falſe Notions concerning our *French* Proteſtants, and the ſame befalls you in this particular; for certain it is, that we always had ſo great a veneration for the Lord's-prayer, that we believ'd all our Prayers, whether publick or private, were deficient and imperfect without it; and therefore we did always, both in the Church, and at home, conclude all our Prayers with the Lord's-prayer, adding moſt commonly the Apoſtle's Creed, and concluding all with the Solemn Bleſſing. *E. D.*

E. D. But when your Miniſters uſed it in the Church, I ſuppoſe they did not repeat it often, as you do; but were content with ſaying of it once onely.

F. P. You are ſtill miſtaken; for our Miniſters do repeat it moſt commonly thrice, and ſometimes more, before they come down from the Pulpit; and according to the Diſcipline or Canons of our Church, they are bound ſo to do.

E. D. This, I confeſs, ſeems ſtrange to me. But let us proceed to what follows next, and that curſorily too, for I begin to be tired with ſpeaking ſo long to no purpoſe; for I find you will have always ſomething ready at hand to daſh my Objections.

F. P. That

F. P. That I may not tire you altogether; I ſhall diſpatch what remains in as few words as poſſible. The next part of the Liturgy that offers it ſelf, are ſome *interlocutory Petitions*, taken out of Holy Scripture: both Miniſter and People in theſe ſhort and devout Ejaculations, ſtriving by turns, who ſhall moſt move God favourably to incline and hearken to their Petitions; and after theſe, the whole Congregation do in a humble poſture, with united hearts and voices, ſupplicate our heavenly Father for his grace and favour, for his help and aid, for his ſafeguard and protection, for the acceptation of their Prayers, and his Divine Bleſſing, not onely for themſelves, but alſo for the King and Queen and Royal Family, for the Church, both Clergy and People, and laſtly, for all Mankind: and

this, in few words, is the design and contents of the following Collects. But I must not forget to observe to you, that upon *Wednesdays*, *Fridays* and *Sundays*, we reade the Litany.

E. D. Pray what is the use of this Litany? or what is it good for?

F. P. I must not, it seems, for fear of trespassing upon your patience, enlarge my self too much, in representing to you the Excellency of this Prayer, and therefore shall tell you, as briefly as I can, the substance and import of it: there is no Vice nor Lust, which therein, we do not pray to be deliver'd from; nor any Grace or Virtue, but we desire God to bestow it upon us; and, in a word, whatsoever is fit to be pray'd for or deprecated in publick, is contained in this Prayer. After which follow some Prayers of

Thank-

Thanksgivings, to be used upon particular occasions, being extreamly well suited to those pious Ends they are intended for; as for Rain, Fair-weather, *&c.*

E. D. But I am sure there is more than this contain'd in your Common-prayer, and therefore pray do not shut up your Book so soon.

F. P. There is something more behind, I confess; but because I am loath to abuse your patience, I hope you will think this general account to be sufficient. What remains unmentioned, are the *Collects*, *Epistles* and *Gospels*; which you cannot but like, as to the matter, because they are the Word of God: And as for their Order, it is admirable, as being so well suited to the particular Days they are appointed for, that by means of them, the Mysteries commemora-

ted upon those days are unfolded, the History represented, or the Example applied to the great benefit and edification of those that truly fear God, and desire to improve themselves in saving knowledge, and are willing to imitate the holy Examples of those faithfull Servants of God, who are departed this life in his Faith and Fear.

E. D. Is this all then?

F. P. No: for besides all this, our Liturgy contains a Form for the Administration of the Lord's-Supper; another for the Publick Baptism of Infants; another for such of riper years; as likewise a short Catechism; the Order of Confirmation; a Form for the Solemnizing of Matrimony; the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, with the Form of Administring to them the Holy Communion; the

Order

Order for the Burial of the Dead, and the Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth; and, lastly, a Commination of God's Anger and Judgment against Sinners.

E. D. Ay, here's a multiplicity of Forms indeed; but I am confident, if you would speak sincerely and from your heart; you will grant me, that all these Forms are very useless and unnecessary.

F. P. If I should grant you this, I must not onely speak against my Judgment and Conscience, but also condemn our *French* Reformed Churches; since it is most certain, that they also have Forms appointed for most of the foresaid occasions: For instance; we have set Forms for Celebrating of the Holy Communion, for the Baptizing of Children, for the Solemnizing of Matrimony, *&c.* And

laſtly, I ſhould condemn and oppoſe the general ſenſe of our *French* Proteſtants, who have always had, and ſtill have a great reſpect and veneration, not onely for thoſe Forms laſt mentioned, but for the whole Body of the Engliſh Liturgy.

E. D. You are pleaſed to ſay ſo.

F. P. And you will be forc'd to ſay ſo too, if you pleaſe onely to take the trouble to reade Dr. *Durel's* Treatiſe in Defence of the Engliſh Liturgy; for there you will meet with unqueſtionable Records of the Opinion and Judgment of all the ableſt and moſt learned Divines amongſt the *French* Proteſtants, who have in all times, and upon all occaſions, as far declared themſelves for the *Engliſh* Common-prayer, and ſpoke as highly and favourably of it as any of the Divines of the Church of *England* ever did.

E. D. I have not Dr. *Durel*'s Book, and therefore cannot ſatisfie my ſelf by peruſing of it; but if you will be pleas'd to inform me what he ſaith concerning the Judgment of your *French* Divines, with reſpect to our *Engliſh* Liturgy, I ſhall be glad to hear it.

F. P. Dr. *Durel*, amongſt other Teſtimonies, produceth a Letter of the Reverend Monſieur *de l' Angle*, at that time one of the Miniſters of the Reformed Church of *Roan*, a Perſon of great Worth and Fame; wherein, upon occaſion of the happy Reſtauration of King *Charles* II. he ſaith, *That his heart leaped for joy, when he was told that the* Engliſh *Liturgy and antient Diſcipline was like to be reſtor'd.* He alledgeth another Teſtimony of Monſieur *Gache*'s, then Miniſter of *Charenton*, one of the moſt

eloquent and zealous Preachers the *French* Reformed Churches ever had, who in one of his Letters declares, *That he had read the* English *Liturgy, and had been wonderfully edified by it.* He produceth also a Letter of Monsieur *du Bosc*, the Minister of *Cane*, an extraordinary Person for Learning, Eloquence and true Piety; where he declares, *That he as much approves of a Minister performing Divine Service, after the way of the Church of* England, *as he that officiates according to the manner of the* French *Reformed Churches.* Besides these, he sets down the Testimony of Monsieur *Bochart* the Minister of *Alancon*, a Man of great Repute and Learning, who declares *he found the Liturgy to be very good, and well order'd*; as also that of Monsieur *Goyon*, Minister of *Bordeaux*, one of the most grave and learned Divines of all the Province of *Aquitain*, and greatly

greatly verſed in Antiquity, in theſe words: *There is not one Miniſter* (ſaith he) *in all the Province of* Aquitain, *that thinks his Conſcience offended by uſing of the* Engliſh *Liturgy; and declares that thoſe people dream and dote, who are of that Opinion; and thoſe Gentlemen amongſt you do extreamly wrong us, when they quote us for to foment their Schiſm, which cannot but be very ſcandalous.*

But that I may not be further tedious, I ſhall refer you to the foreſaid Book of Dr. *Durel*, where you will find enough to convince you, that all our worthy Divines, ſuch as *Peter du Moulin*, Monſieur *Drelincourt*, Monſieur *Daillé*, Monſieur *Amyraut*, &c. have expreſs'd no leſs Eſteem for the *Engliſh* Liturgy, than any Son of the Church of *England* ever did. To all which Teſtimonies, I will add that of *Spanhemius* a *French* Divine, and ſometimes Preacher

cher and Divinity-Reader at *Geneva*, in his Epiſtle Dedicatory to the Lord Primate of *Ireland*, prefixed to the Third Part of his *Dubia Evangelica*; where commending the Publick Worſhip of God in the Church of *England*, he declares, that *the like is ſcarcely to be found elſewhere.*

E. D. According to what you tell me, I cannot believe your *French* Divines to be *Calviniſts*; for I am confident *Calvin* was not of their opinion with regard to the *Engliſh* Liturgy.

F. P. To the end you may be able to judge what *Calvin's* opinion was about this matter, I ſhall refer you to a paſſage of his, in an Epiſtle Dedicatory to the Duke of *Somerſet*, Lord Protector during the minority of King *Edward* VI. which will

will convince you, I ſuppoſe, that he was of the ſame judgment with the reſt of our *French* Divines; his words are theſe, *Quoad formam Precum & Rituum Eccleſiaſticorum*, valde probo, *ut certa illa exſtet, à qua Paſtoribus diſcedere in functione ſua non liceat, tam ut conſulatur quorundam ſimplicitati & imperitiæ, quam ut certius ita conſtet omnium inter ſe Eccleſiarum conſenſus; poſtremò etiam ut obviam eatur deſultoriæ quorundam levitati, qui novationes quaſdam affectant.* Which may be engliſhed thus, *As touching the form of Prayer and Ceremonies of the Church*, I do extremely approve, *that it be ſet and fixed, ſo as it may not be lawfull for the Miniſters to recede from it, in their function; as well to help and aſſiſt the ſimplicity and unſkilfulneſs of ſome, as to give a fuller evidence of the conſent and uniformity of all the ſeveral Congregations; and finally, that by this*

means,

means, the changeable humour of those that affect novelties may be check'd and obviated.

E. D. I always thought *Calvin* had been of the same judgment that we are, though you would seem to persuade me to the contrary. But to make an end of our Discourse at this time, I shall onely ask you one question more, and then I have done, which is this, What your *French* Divines judge concerning us, who for Conscience sake refuse to make use of the Liturgy in our Assemblies, or to frequent the Congregations of those that do?

F. P. What you desire you may find in the forementioned Discourse of Dr. *Durel*, where he sets down this Letter of the Reverend Monsieur *Goyon*, Minister at *Bordeaux*, which is thus translated:

SIR,

SIR,

I *Have received your Letter with an extreme satisfaction, as having been informed thereby, both of your own condition, and of that of the Church of* England. *I must confess that we have been strangely deceived in this Countrey, by what hath been related to us touching the* English *Presbyterians. I did always imagine them to be a People that followed the same order we observe in our Churches of* France; *but it seems they are very far from it. The Description you give of them, shews them to be a strange Sect, not fit to be tolerated; and, I conceive, that the best remedy of this disorder and confusion would be, to reduce them all to the Episcopal Government, for I hold it impossible that the Church of* England *should ever be quiet or flourish otherwise. The Convocation comes in a very fit time for*

this

this purpose; and I question not but that Assembly will take order about it, which will be a great satisfaction to me; for otherwise you will be continually in trouble, and the Adversaries will take advantage thereby either to blemish and slander our Religion, or to contrive and foment Plots against the State. I beseech the Lord that he would be pleased to rule and govern that Holy Assembly, and pour his Blessings upon their Determinations for the Advancement of his Kingdom.

E. D. Though this Man saith too much, yet he saith nothing in particular to the point of our refusing to reade the Common-prayer in our Assemblies, and to frequent the Churches where it is read.

F. P. If you think that Monsieur *Goyon* doth not speak home enough to

to the matter in queſtion, be pleaſed to reade what *Ludovicus Capellus*, Divinity-Profeſſor at *Saumur*, ſaith to it, in the Body of Divinity publiſhed by him and his two Collegues, *Moſes Amyraldus* and *Joſhua Placæus*; in which Book this Learned Man, having at large proved the *Lawfulneſs*, *Uſe* and *Neceſſity* of a ſet Form of Liturgy, in oppoſition to the then newly ſtarted *Directory*, which the Presbyterians endeavour'd to eſtabliſh inſtead of the Common-prayer. It is alſo worthy our noting, that he maintain'd a publick Diſpute on this Subject in the Divinity-School, wherein he defended the Common-prayer of the Church of *England*, as good, ſound and expedient, againſt the Cavils and Objections of the Presbyterians, even at that very time when the Oppoſers of ſet Forms were in the greateſt power in this Kingdom, and that it

was

was generally believed the Liturgy of the Church of *England* would never have been restored.

E. D. But what saith he in particular of us, for if you don't tell me, I shall scarce take the pains of reading over his Book to inform my self?

F. P. I am unwilling to give you his words, because I fear you'll find some of his Expressions too sharp and cutting.

E. D. As long as I suppose he was no *English* Tory, I shall take all he saith of us in good part.

F. P. Towards the end of his first *Thesis*, he saith, *Unum superest examinandum*, &c. which in *English* speaks thus: " There remains yet " one thing to be enquir'd into, *viz.* " Whether there ought to be a cer-

" tain

" tain ſet Form of Liturgy, conſiſ-
" ting of expreſs words; or, Whe-
" ther it ought rather to be left to
" the will of the Paſtor, to uſe what
" words or form he pleaſeth; and
" this becauſe of a new Generation
" of late Upſtarts, which will ad-
" mit of no certain and preſcribed
" Form of Liturgy, neither in the
" publick Aſſemblies of the Church,
" nor in private Devotions; but
" maintain that all ought to be left
" to the pleaſure of Miniſters and
" the Heads of Families. And in his
" ſixth *Theſis* he declares, That the
" ſeveral Authors of the Reformati-
" on had every where compos'd and
" preſcrib'd ſeveral ſet Forms of Li-
" turgy, and that the ſame were ſtill
" made uſe of by the Reformed
" Churches in their ſeveral Nations
" and Diſtricts with happy ſucceſs
" and edification; till of late there
" aroſe in *England* a froward, ſcru-
" pulous

" pulous and over nice (not to ſay
" ſuperſtitious) Generation of men,
" who thought good not onely to
" blame and find fault with, but
" wholly to abrogate and caſt off
" the Liturgy hitherto uſed in their
" Church, inſtead whereof they
" have introduc'd their *Directory* as
" they call it. He adds further,
" That the Reaſons and Cauſes you
" pretend to have for aboliſhing the
" Common-prayer were *leviſſimæ*,
" *nulliuſque pene momenti*, very ſlight,
" and ſcarce of any moment at all.
And in *Theſis* 28. he ſaith, " Cer-
" tainly nothing elſe has ſtirred up
" theſe men ſo eagerly to reject all
" manner of ſet Forms of Prayer,
" but partly the deſire of innovating
" and corrupting, to the end that,
" under the ſpecious pretext of Li-
" berty to pray and prophesie, they
" might introduce all manner of
" Sects and Errors into the Church;

" and

" and partly their false and prejudi-
" cate opinion, persuading them-
" selves that we are now arriv'd at
" that time, wherein, as in the days
" of the Apostles, the Spirit of Pro-
" phecy, of Prayer and Supplicati-
" ons, is to be poured forth upon
" the present Church, according to
" that of *Joel* 2. 28. and *Zach.* 12.
" v. 10. which is the common and
" most pestilent Error of all the
" Phanaticks, concerning the sen-
" ding of the H.Ghost by Christ, *&c.*
And drawing up his whole Disser-
tation into certain Conclusions,
he saith, *Thesis* 49. " The use of
" these set Forms of Prayer cannot
" justly be condemned, forasmuch
" as the same may be always and e-
" very where profitable and conve-
" nient; and because they have been
" receiv'd by the universal Christian
" Church for these 1300 years all
" the World over, except onely a-
" mong

" mong these new-fangled *Independents*, so he calls all those who reject the use of set Forms. And *Thesis* 50. he adds further; So that the perversness, peevishness and superstition, or rather the malapert and obstinate wilfulness of these men is both prodigious and senseless, who, out of a mere humour or desire of lawless licentiousness, or out of design to introduce confusion into the Church, do superstitiously condemn and compare to an Idol, forbidden by the fourth Commandment, a thing which in it self is most innocent, the use of it edifying, and the practice of it most convenient, which has long obtained in the Universal Church, was never yet condemned by any Church, and which all the Churches of God make use of with the greatest benefit that may be, which yet

" these men, most foolishly, would
" have all to forbear and abhor.
And lastly, in 51 *Thesis*, he saith,
" And amongst the rest, those are
" most to be detested, who either
" will not allow the Lord's Prayer
" to be said at all, or will have it
" said alone, and not in conjunction
" on with any other Prayer whether
" publick or private, and who think
" it a great sin for any godly man
" to be present either in the Church
" at Common-prayer, or in any Family
" at private Devotions, where
" any set Form is used; and hold
" this for a just cause of Separation
" from the Church, lest they should
" be Partakers of the Sins of those
" who use set Forms, and thereby
" become defiled, being not unlike
" to those of whom the Prophet *Isaiah*
" speaks, *chap.* 6. *v.* 5. *which*
" *say, Stand by thy self; come not*
" *near me; for I am holier than*
thou

" *thou; these are a smoak in my no-*
" *strils, saith the Lord:* that is, they
" kindle my wrath against them.
" The Lord grant they may return
" to a better mind. *Amen.*

And so say I too. *Amen, Amen.*

And thus I take my leave of you in the words of this Learned and most Renowned Divine.

E. D. But pray why in such haste? We have not yet made an end of our dispute; for when I told you I had done, I meant with your Liturgy: Wherefore now it remains that we discourse concerning the *Ceremonies* of your Church, which I intended for a Second Part of this our Conference.

F. P. If I be not mistaken, we have discours'd long enough for once;

once; beſides, I muſt give you time to conſider what hath been ſaid; and if you chance to approve it, and deſire further to diſcourſe me about the *Ceremonies* of the Church; I now aſſure you, that I ſhall at any time be ready to ſerve you to the utmoſt of my power.

The End of the Firſt Part.